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SERVIUS THE COMMENTATOR OF THE AENEID AND SOME OF HIS PREDECESSORS

In Two Parts—Part II

M Valerius Probus of Berytus, the last name in Suetonius's enumeration of grammatici, was still living in Martial's time about 88. His *Silva Observationum Sermonis Antiqui* long remained in valuation as a standard work. He ranked above the other philologists and so Ausonius rates him in the fourth century, e g p 2 i 20 Peiper—et nomen grammatici merui Non tam grande quidem, quo gloria nostra subiret, Aemilium aut Scaurum Berytiumve Probum, and p 63 12—Scaurum Probumque corde callens intimo,—and p 66 7—Grammatici ad Scaurum atque Probum. His work was, to use the words of Suetonius (de Gramm) to establish the characteristics of the *Sermo antiquus* of which he left non mediocrem silvam which clearly is not a title, but the designation which Suetonius gave to the mass of notes. Further S specified for Probus the three functions: Emendare, Distinguere, Adnotare. Some of the readers of *The Leaflet* may ask what distinguishere was. It was pointing, or punctuation (Servius I 475,548 et passim). This seems to me to prove that the earlier MSS in the main were without these points; cf e g II 273 Heu mihi! qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo: Servius (Daniel's addition) et totum iungendum, ne doloris distinctione frigescat, sicut plurimis doctissimis visum est. Diomedes (Ars Grammatica Keil I 437 14) defines thus: distinctio quid est? apposito puncto nota finiti sensus vel pendens mora. Could not Servius have had access to the original works or MSS of his Vergil in his own day? They certainly seem to have cited their Varro from the latter's *secenti libri* (to use a phrase of Ausonius) ex pleno fonte. Further then, Probus in the manner of Aristarchus on Homer, in the manner also of Ennius and of Aelius Stilo before him used critical marks or symbols on the margin of verses: the obelus, asterisk, dipole, antisigma, ceraunion etc cf Reifferscheid's Suetonius p 137: et postremo Probus, qui illas in Vergilio et Horatio et Lucretio apposuit, ut Homero Aristarchus. (For a full survey of the Greek critical notae see Dindorf's *Scholias in Iliadem*, Oxford 1875 I praef XX foll). The following passage seems to imply that Probus's own Vergil was still extant in the time of Servius: Aen I 21: in Probi (exemplari, I take it) adpuncti sunt (are provided with a mark) (ei versus scil) et adnotatum "hi duo si eximantur, nihilo minus sensus integer erit". "Sed Vergilius", says Servius, defending the tradition, "amat alius agens exire in 'laudes populi Romani'". Servius, it is true, often couples the name of Probus with a star of lesser magnitude: Probus et alii (VI exord), also VI 437; et Trogius et Probus VI 782; Probus et Carminius VIII 406). As Probus was so highly prized by the profession to which we all belong, I

will conclude my notes on him with a veritable plum, viz with a verbal citation of an actual note of Probus in full: XII 605 *Filia prima manu flavos Lavinia crinis Et roseas laniata genas antiqua lectio flores habuit, i e, florulentos, pulchros, et est sermo Ennianus. Probus sic adnotavit: neotericum ultra modum erat flavos, ergo bene flores, nam sequitur et roseas laniata genas. Accius in Bacchis 'nam flori crines, video, si propexi iacent', in iisdem 'et lanugo flora nunc demum inrigat',—Pacuvius Antiopa 'cervicum flores dispergite crines'. The whole, I am sure, an admirable specimen of the *silva sermonis antiqui* as Suetonius calls it. Nettleship refers to this note on flavos—flowers without citing it in full; I say we may well rejoice at having this plum, with but slight attention as to the directness or indirectness with which Servius got it. Is the matter significant per se?: that is the point.*

Passing over the copious data which Nettleship adduced from Nonius Marcellus, we pass on to Velius Longus (Teuffel 343). He preceded Gellius and is assigned to the age of Trajan. He too, like Probus, was a student of antiqua lectio, and an authority on Latin orthography. The traditional reading of Aen X 245 was spectabis: Crastina lux! (mea si non irrita verba putaris) Ingentis Rutulae spectabis caedis acervos. Now we read spectabit, as Servius, too, edits from 'quidam', and he calls it vera lectio. Longus maintained the harsher spectabis. But he did not take it with that sense with which I attempted to endow it. No: crastina lux (scil venerit), assuming an ellipsis: Longus ait 'deest venerit' unde et ipse spectabis legit. We see again how certain readings were defended or rejected through many generations. Macrobius too (III 6 6) cites Velius on Aen III 84 *Templa dei saxo venerabar structa vetusto*: notice, please, that the friend and coreligionist of Servius gives here a verbal citation; immutatio est epitheti; vult enim dicere vetustatem templi. Hunc multi alii commentatores secuti sunt, sed frigidum est aedificii aetatem notare.

Flavius Caper was a grammaticus, possibly likewise of the time of Trajan (Teuffel 343 3). S cites him as an authority for hoc clipeum IX 706; X 344 we hear that Caper cites a nominative femina as variant of femur (in his libri enucleati sermonis): no actual passage however, is cited.

Urbanus is not rarely cited in S. Ribbeck puts him late. Nettleship argues for Hadrian's time. The remnants are insignificant, says Teuffel, transcribing here apparently from Ribbeck. But how accidental, how fortuitous are the bits to which his name is tacked. The names given at all stood out of a veritable ocean of Vergilian exegesis as those of the more prominent men, stood out among the unnamed alii multi, quidam, plerique. In the curse of Dido IV 384 *sequear atris ignibus absens*, what indeed are atris ignes? Some gave torches of the Erinyes, others of Dido's socii (cf 594). But it is better,

says S, to take it with Urbanus rogalibus ignibus, the beacons of the funeral pyre the sight of which to seafaring men portends storm.

Only one philologist we have seen was rated as a peer of Probus by the professional grammatici. This was Terentius Scaurus (Teuffel 352) of Hadrian's age. He wrote a commentary on the Aeneid and at least ten books on Horace. Of the former we receive but a glimpse, III 484 cedit honori: Scaurus vero honore legit et intellegit: honore non cedit Heleno qui patri eius vel avo donaverat.

IV.

What then did Servius himself do besides marshalling, digesting, approving or rejecting, the work of his predecessors? Was the mass of the exegetical tradition so vast that his personal contributions were immersed, smothered or lost, therein? The Romans who clung to their own past, men like Symmachus and Macrobius as well as Ausonius who endeavored to make some kind of transition, worked upon Vergil as the matchless model. He is, in the phrase of the consular Symmachus, simply noster vates, poeta noster, the Mantuan. The Greeks had long been making a kind of Cyclopaedia of their Homer (of Strabo's Geography). Similarly the Roman world did with Vergil. As for Servius, it is clear, when he built his book, the commentary of most recent standing and prestige was that of Donatus. Aelius Donatus, grammaticus and rhetor, was the teacher of St Jerome, too, who taught in Rome about 350, more widely known to lasting fame by his commentary on Terence and by the best Life of Vergil we have. Woelfflin (Philologus XXIV 153) printed from a Paris MS an interesting introduction which bears all the earmarks of genuineness and of a distinct personality. He there professes that he has studied all the Vergilian scholars of the past, that he has striven to select but little, but that the best, out of the vast field; that he strove for the preservation of the "genuine utterances" of ancient authority; that he desired to eliminate as far as possible his own personality in this process; that his work really was intended to "show the way and to hold out a hand" to the professional teacher who was a tyro as yet and had but recently begun his career. But was Donatus a mere sieve? No, there must also have been an element of personal scholarship in these notes, for it is difficult to understand how Servius could have directed his strictures against a mere transcriber or compiler. Now Servius as we have him, almost uniformly cites Donatus by name only, with an appended stricture or some form of carping and fault-finding. So II 557 iacet ingens litore truncus "quod autem Donatus dicit 'litus' locum esse ante aras, a litando dictum . . . , ratione caret: nam a litando 'li' brevis est et stare non potest versus". Even to the unprejudiced some views of Donatus really appear puzzling, as this one, II 798 collectam exilio pubem: Donatus contra metrum sensit (took the meaning to be) dicens ex Ilio quasi de Ilio, nam longa est. Again III 242 of the Harpies: nam quod Donatus dicit ideo eas fuisse invulnerabiles quia de Styge erant natae, non probatur, says S. Further on of the cyclops Polyphemus and his solitary eye: quod torva solum sub fronte latebat. Here was a puzzle: how can an eye be concealed that is a disk comparable to an Argive shield or to the sun itself? S says 'dormientis scilicet; nam male sentit Donatus dicens late patebat contra metrum. Item

dicit capillis tegebatur aut latebat corporis comparatione, absolutus tamen est prior sensus'. We see, then, that Donatus, not unlike the Variorum editions of Batavian scholars, presented a variety of exegetical notes on difficult or controverted lines, as Porphyrio on Horace frequently does. Again, VI 230 spargere rore levi et ramo felicitis olivae, Servius 'arboris festae. Sed moris fuerat ut de lauro fieret. Sane dicit quos (and this he accepts without carping) hoc propter Augustum mutavit. Nam nata erat laurus in Palatio eo die quo Augustus: unde triumphantes coronari consueverant. Propter quam rem noluit laurum ad officium lugubre pertinere'. But space forbids carrying this interesting comparison further, and I must be satisfied with transcribing from my private index the other references of Donatus: notes in Servius: VI 339, 535, 623: Donatus charged Cicero with the crime of Kinyras; VII 543: D's name is coupled with that of Probus and Asper; VII 563; VII 333, 373: one of the grave quaestiones of many generations of grammatici; IX 361, one of the twelve insoluble passages; 544: male intellexit D; 672: non procedit (it will not do, a favorite phrase of Servius's); 760; male ait X 331, 463, 497; on a certain etymology stulte sensit XI 31; 331: frustra ait; 316; erravit; 318: superfluum est; 762; XII 365: errasse Donatum; 366: male ait; 514: hoc non procedit; 529: superfluum est; 585.

The rather narrow use of literature to furnish tropi and figurae in the schools of the grammatici and rhetores is familiar to classicists. Servius's notes are probably not excelled by anything that has reached us in this respect: cf Quintilian IX 1 foll. And then that greatest master of the Flavian era even in his own day complained of the excess of nomenclature (IX 1 22): neque movent me nomina illa quae fingere utique Graecis promptissimum est. And the multitude of citations from Vergil in this part of Quintilian shows the textbook character so completely attained by the national epic. Most of the technical terms remained in their form. The generis figura indeed is used for more than schema; figura honesta IV 401; figurate passim, figuratum II 218; figuratis coloribus V 687; even the Comparative figuratus IV 529; nuda genu is simply disposed of as Graeca figura. Elocutio (phrase expression) as in Porphyrio; we have elocutio honesta (a noble phrase), reciproca, soluta, bona, vitiosa. To this narrower range of Latin nomenclature belongs comparatio, abutiva, absolute exaggeratio a synonymis, translatio (metaphor), usurpative, subaudive, or utrinsecus, accipere (to supply), signate, ordo pronuntiandum, proprietates verborum, distinguere. But on the other hand we have the overwhelming mass of Greek terminology, often in Greek script for differentiation, antistoechon, archaismos, but also vetuste and antique, amphibolon, amphibolia, amphibolikos, katachrestikos, katachresis, hypallage, hyperbole and hyperbolikos; sometimes the class room rabbits of diction seem to run into the pen of Servius, e.g. periphrasis est, id est circumlocutio I 65; dilemma, id est complexio II 675. We meet diasynceps, but also inrisorie, tapinosis as a rule, but also attenuatio, oeconomia (the author's plan or design), also prooeconomia; cf dispensat III 19, praestruxisse XI 593.

A striking trait of these humbler class room features, and one in which I would like to address myself to a very practical point is the teaching or Roman verse to young people. When the modern

teacher comes to see how frequently the ancient grammaticus gave to his boys the *ordo*, i e rearranged the words in a series of ordinary prose usage, abandoning the hyperbaton of the poet's metrical composition—then, I say, should we not look upon this exercise not indeed as an exceptional operation, but as the steady rule for our pupils, who are so vastly more removed from Roman antiquity and from the immediate feeling of Latin inflection? I must limit myself to a few citations: I 53 *ordo autem talis est: Aeolus ventos et tempestates sonoras vasto antro premit. A notable passage II 348: ordo talis est: iuvenes, fortissima pectora, frustra succurritis urbi incensae, quia excrescerunt omnes dii; unde si vobis cupido certa est me sequi audentem extrema, moriamur, et in media arma ruamus. Obscuritatem autem facit hoc loco et synchysis, i e hyperbati longi confusio et falsa lectio. I 265: ordo autem, est longissimum Aenean, tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas. And many other passages.*

Servius clearly is a rhetor, not a grammaticus only. I have noted about 107 passages where the technical language of the rhetor stands clearly revealed. A few examples must suffice: sicut dicturi thema proponimus (Thilo p 5); servavit to prepon I 92; argumentum ab impossibili II 529; suasoria est omni parte plena IV 31; notandum sane quia controversiarum more epilogos dedit sex istis prioribus libris, quos et esse bioticos voluit III 718; haec oratio rhetorica suasio est VII 374; paene omnes partes habet de misericordia commovenda a Cicerone in Rhetoricis positas IX 479; et est color qui in coniecturali statu saepe requiritur II 150; invectio quae semper statu caret IV 364. As for the practice of schools (in the progymnasmata) cf taking themata from Vergil: Titianus et Calvus qui themata omnia de Vergilio elicuerunt et deformaverunt in exemplo controversiarum has duo posuerunt adlocutiones X 18.

Servius, like his friends Symmachus and Macrobius, in trying to hold fast to the old Roman cult, sought for all the support available in the entire range of Latin letters, and not a little of the Greek. Naturally they preferred the more ancient, which coincided with the greatness of Rome as they reasoned, as being more substantial. And while their lectio had a certain universality, they drew with patriotic fervor from Varro of Reate. As a rule, however, problems are quickly disposed of by lectum est (rarely legitur), the very shibboleth of authority; lectum est in historia Poenorum et in Livio I 343; licet in Sallustio lectum sit I 380; in ornithogonia I 393; in Bacchidibus (of Euripides) II 13; habemus in Livio II 148; frenum raro lectum est, i e you do not often find it in the Standard (idonei) authors, XII 568. Among these, as far as matter is concerned, the greatest probably is Varro, whose vast antiquarian collections of Roman ritual, cult, and social institutions were the very breath in the nostrils of the society of Symmachus—a kind of re-discovery perhaps in these circles. Servius furnishes us copious transcriptions (cf also Augustinus De Civ Dei) particularly where he desired to illumine or to specify some matter of Roman religion or ritual, matters largely identical indeed.

This matter this company needed, and particularly in the legendary story of Aeneas, the lawgiver and establisher, as they liked to believe, of Roman rites. Of course this line of interpretation was not new, but had probably been largely forgotten. It is in

this fervid and reverential concern in which Macrobius agrees with his friend. Whether Vergil, who knew the domestic policies of Augustus intimately, meant or intended all this second or implied meaning of institutional suggestion with which the commentators endowed him, I do not undertake to state. Cf e g III 463 'effatus' verbo augurali usus est, nam poeta divinus peritiam suam inventa occasione semper ostendit—that however is the question. IV 537 omen, where the libri Etrusci are cited, or III 607 hic ostenditur subtiliter Anchisen et Aenean tam pontificatus quam flaminii iuris et peritos et praesules fuisse. On Roman marriage forms IV 103, on the ritual dress of the flaminica ib 137; quidam volunt Vergilium ubique Didonis tamquam flaminicae facera mentionem, IV 462. But it is quite unnecessary to accumulate data any further: this class of exegetical transcriptions also are the most bulky, and indeed to us the most precious, in the entire extant corpus of Servian exegesis. Quite the same kind of material is met with in Macrobius.

Before closing I must call attention to a didactic habit which pervades Servius. I mean the use of Greek glosses. We see that the pupils' knowledge cannot have been much inferior to that of Latin: culturally, they had so to speak two native tongues.

I have nursed a fond hope that these collections and observations might tempt some American teachers of Vergil to widen the vision of their subject and to realize the manifold interests therein maintained by so many centuries. I will close with an enumeration of the chief groups which my study of Servius seemed to furnish. 1 Critics of Vergil 2 Religious and antiquarian element 3 Greek erudition in the Aeneid—Homer parallels etc 4 Servius grammaticus 5 Servius rhetor 6 Varro named and unnamed 7 Servius's own Latinity the idiom of 380 A D 8 Illustration of the text from Latin authors (especially Lucan, Statius, Ennius, Sallust, Horace, Cicero, Plautus, Terence, Juvenal, Varro) 9 Technical vocabulary 10 Earlier commentators, artigraphi etc 11 Greek glosses 12 Etymologies 13 Servius and philosophy.

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